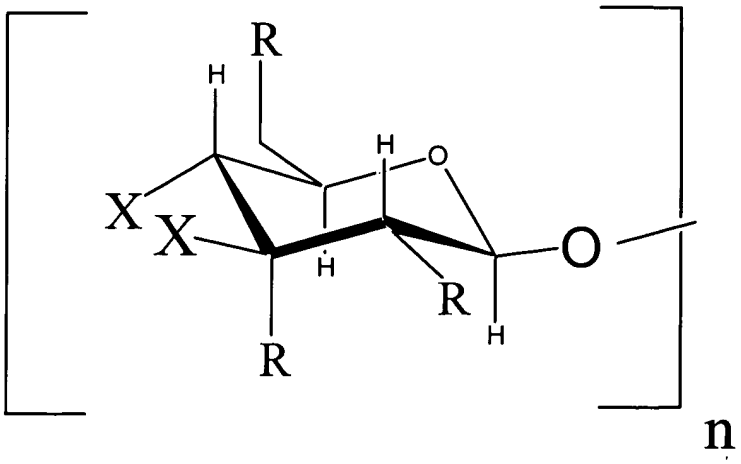
WHAT IS CLAIMED

1. A method of reducing the percentage of body fat in a mammal comprising administering a sufficient amount of viscous, water-soluble, non-nutritive, non-starch, indigestible polysaccharide to the mammal for a time sufficient to reduce the percentage of body fat in the mammal.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the polysaccharide is a polymer of monosaccharides substantially connected by beta (β) glycosidic linkages.
3. The method of claim claim 2 wherein the monosaccharides are arabinose, fructose, glucose, glucosamine, glucuronic acid, galactose, galactosammine, mannose, N-acetylmuramic acid, N-acetylneuraminic acid, rhamnose, xylose or a mixture thereof.
4. The method of claim 2 wherein the beta glycosidic linkages are 1→ 2 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 3 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 4 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 6 beta-glycosidic or a mixture thereof.
5. The method of claim 2 wherein the beta glycosidic linkages are 1 → 3 beta glycosidic linkages or 1→ 4 beta glycosidic linkages, or a mixture of 1 → 3 and 1→ 4 beta-glycosidic linkages.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein the polysaccharide is locust bean gum, guar gum, carrageenan, alginate, modified cellulose, beta-glucan, or glucomannan.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein the polysaccharide has Formula I:



wherein

each R is separately hydroxy, lower alkyloxy, or hydroxy (lower(alkyloxy));

n is an integer ranging from about 500 to about 2500; and

X is an R group or a covalent bond to the oxygen at the first position of the adjacent monosaccharide.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the polysaccharide is methylcellulose, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxyethyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxybutyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxyethyl ethylcellulose, 2-hydroxypropyl cellulose, methyl ethylcellulose, or 2-hydroxyethylcellulose.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein the polysaccharide is β-glucan.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein the polysaccharide is hydroxypropyl methylcellulose.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein the sufficient amount of polysaccharide is an amount that provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1000 mPa·s to about 3000 mPa·s
12. The method of claim 11 wherein the sufficient amount of polysaccharide is an amount that provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1500 mPa·s to about 2500 mPa·s.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein the sufficient amount of polysaccharide is about 1 g to about 5 g polysaccharide per meal.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein the sufficient amount of polysaccharide is about 2 g to about 3 g polysaccharide per meal.
15. The method of claim 1 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about two to at least about ten weeks.
16. The method of claim 1 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about three weeks to at least about eight weeks
17. The method of claim 1 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about four to at least about six weeks.
18. The method of claim 1 wherein the polysaccharide is administered indefinitely.

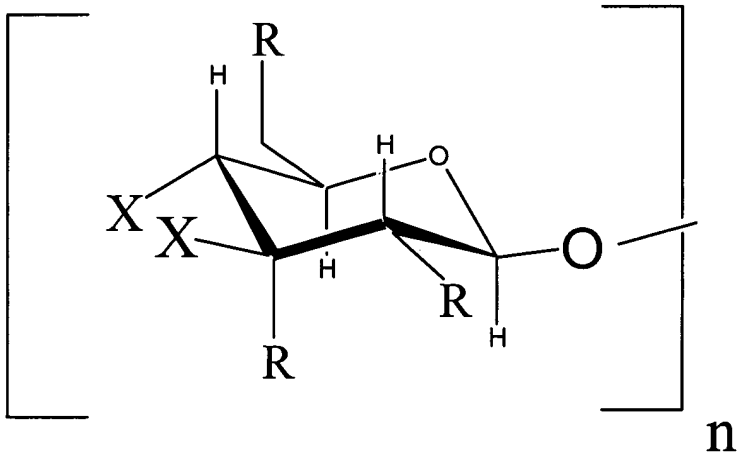
19. The method of claim 1 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 5% to about 40%.
20. The method of claim 1 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 10% to about 30%.
21. The method of claim 1 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 15% to about 25%.
22. The method of claim 1 where the mammal is a human.
23. The method of claim 1 where the polysaccharide is administered in an applesauce, a cereal, a cookie, a cracker, a flavored drink, a fruit juice, an ice cream, a milk shake, a pudding or a snack bar.
24. A method of reducing the percentage of body fat in a mammal comprising administering a sufficient amount of beta-glucan to the mammal for a time sufficient to reduce the percentage of body fat in the mammal.
25. The method of claim 24 wherein the sufficient amount of beta-glucan is an amount that provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1000 mPa·s to about 3000 mPa·s
26. The method of claim 24 wherein the sufficient amount of beta-glucan is an amount that provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1500 mPa·s to about 2500 mPa·s.
27. The method of claim 24 wherein the sufficient amount of beta-glucan is about 1 g to about 5 g beta-glucan per meal.
28. The method of claim 24 wherein the sufficient amount of beta-glucan is about 2 g to about 3 g beta-glucan per meal.
29. The method of claim 24 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about two to at least about ten weeks.
30. The method of claim 24 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about three weeks to at least about eight weeks.
31. The method of claim 24 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about four to at least about six weeks.
32. The method of claim 24 wherein the beta-glucan is administered indefinitely.

33. The method of claim 24 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 5% to about 40%.
34. The method of claim 24 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 10% to about 30%.
35. The method of claim 24 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 15% to about 25%.
36. The method of claim 24 where the mammal is a human.
37. The method of claim 24 where the beta-glucan is administered in an applesauce, a cereal, a cookie, a cracker, a flavored drink, a fruit juice, an ice cream, a milk shake, a pudding or a snack bar.
38. A method of reducing the percentage of body fat in a mammal comprising administering a sufficient amount of hydroxypropyl methylcellulose to the mammal for a time sufficient to reduce the percentage of body fat in the mammal.
39. The method of claim 38 wherein the sufficient amount of hydroxypropyl methylcellulose is an amount that provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1000 mPa·s to about 3000 mPa·s
40. The method of claim 38 wherein the sufficient amount of hydroxypropyl methylcellulose is an amount that provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1500 mPa·s to about 2500 mPa·s.
41. The method of claim 38 wherein the sufficient amount of hydroxypropyl methylcellulose is about 1 g to about 5 g hydroxypropyl methylcellulose per meal.
42. The method of claim 38 wherein the sufficient amount of hydroxypropyl methylcellulose is about 2 g to about 3 g hydroxypropyl methylcellulose per meal.
43. The method of claim 38 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about two to at least about ten weeks.
44. The method of claim 38 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about three weeks to at least about eight weeks.

45. The method of claim 38 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the percentage of body fat is at least about four to at least about six weeks.
46. The method of claim 38 wherein the hydroxypropyl methylcellulose is administered indefinitely.
47. The method of claim 38 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 5% to about 40%.
48. The method of claim 38 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 10% to about 30%.
49. The method of claim 38 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 15% to about 25%.
50. The method of claim 38 where the mammal is a human.
51. The method of claim 38 where the hydroxypropyl methylcellulose is administered in an applesauce, a cereal, a cookie, a cracker, a flavored drink, a fruit juice, an ice cream, a milk shake, a pudding or a snack bar.
52. A method of reducing the level of leptin in the bloodstream of a mammal comprising administering a sufficient amount of viscous, water-soluble, non-nutritive, non-starch, indigestible polysaccharide to the mammal for a time sufficient to reduce the level of leptin in the bloodstream of the mammal.
53. The method of claim 52 wherein the polysaccharide is a polymer of monosaccharides substantially connected by beta (β) glycosidic linkages.
54. The method of claim 53 wherein the monosaccharides are arabinose, fructose, glucose, glucosamine, glucuronic acid, galactose, galactosammine, mannose, N-acetylmuramic acid, N-acetylneuraminic acid, rhamnose, xylose or a mixture thereof.
55. The method of claim 53 wherein the beta glycosidic linkages are 1→ 2 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 3 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 4 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 6 beta-glycosidic or a mixture thereof.
56. The method of claim 53 wherein the beta glycosidic linkages are 1 → 3 beta glycosidic linkages or 1→ 4 beta glycosidic linkages, or a mixture of 1 → 3 and 1→ 4 beta-glycosidic linkages.

57. The method of claim 52 wherein the polysaccharide is locust bean gum, guar gum, carrageenan, alginate, modified cellulose, beta-glucan, or glucomannan.

58. The method of claim 52 wherein the polysaccharide has Formula I:



wherein

each R is separately hydroxy, lower alkyloxy, or hydroxy (lower(alkyloxy));

n is an integer ranging from about 500 to about 2500; and

X is an R group or a covalent bond to the oxygen at the first position of the adjacent monosaccharide.

59. The method of claim 52 wherein the polysaccharide is methylcellulose, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxyethyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxybutyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxyethyl ethylcellulose, 2-hydroxypropyl cellulose, methyl ethylcellulose, or 2-hydroxyethylcellulose.

60. The method of claim 52 wherein the polysaccharide is β-glucan.

61. The method of claim 52 wherein the polysaccharide is hydroxypropyl methylcellulose.

62. The method of claim 52 wherein the sufficient amount of polysaccharide is an amount that provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1000 mPa·s to about 3000 mPa·s

63. The method of claim 52 wherein the sufficient amount of polysaccharide is an amount that provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1500 mPa·s to about 2500 mPa·s.
64. The method of claim 52 wherein the sufficient amount of polysaccharide is about 1 g to about 5 g polysaccharide per meal.
65. The method of claim 52 wherein the sufficient amount of viscous polysaccharide is about 2 g to about 3 g polysaccharide per meal.
66. The method of claim 52 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the level of leptin in the bloodstream of a mammal is at least about two to at least about ten weeks.
67. The method of claim 52 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the level of leptin in the bloodstream of a mammal is at least about three weeks to at least about eight weeks
68. The method of claim 52 wherein the time sufficient for reducing the level of leptin in the bloodstream of a mammal is at least about four to at least about six weeks.
69. The method of claim 52 wherein the polysaccharide is administered indefinitely.
70. The method of claim 52 where the level of leptin in the bloodstream of a mammal is reduced by about 5% to about 50%.
71. The method of claim 52 where the level of leptin in the bloodstream of a mammal is reduced by about 10% to about 40%.
72. The method of claim 52 where the level of leptin in the bloodstream of a mammal is reduced by about 15% to about 35%.
73. The method of claim 52 where the mammal is a human.
74. The method of claim 52 where the polysaccharide is administered in an applesauce, a cereal, a cookie, a cracker, a flavored drink, a fruit juice, an ice cream, a milk shake, a pudding or a snack bar.
75. A composition for lowering the percentage of body fat in a mammal comprising about 1 g to about 5 g of viscous, water-soluble, non-nutritive, non-starch, indigestible polysaccharide, wherein said composition can lower the percentage

of body fat when administered about two to three times per day for about at least about two to at least about ten weeks.

76. The composition of claim 75 containing about 1.5 g to about 4 g of the polysaccharide.

77. The composition of claim 75 containing about 2 g to about 3 g of the polysaccharide.

78. The composition of claim 75 wherein the polysaccharide is a polymer of monosaccharides substantially connected by beta (β) glycosidic linkages.

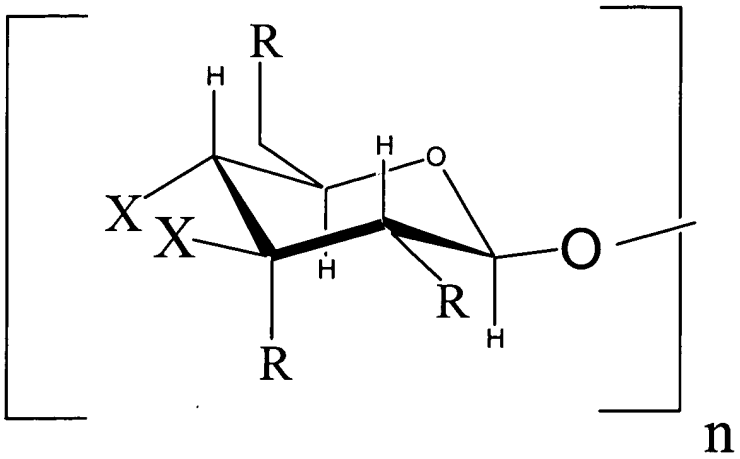
79. The composition of claim 78 wherein the monosaccharides are arabinose, fructose, glucose, glucosamine, glucuronic acid, galactose, galactosammine, mannose, N-acetylmuramic acid, N-acetylneuraminic acid, rhamnose, xylose or a mixture thereof.

80. The composition of claim 78 wherein the beta glycosidic linkages are 1→ 2 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 3 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 4 beta-glycosidic bonds, 1→ 6 beta-glycosidic or a mixture thereof.

81. The composition of claim 78 wherein the beta glycosidic linkages are 1 → 3 beta glycosidic linkages or 1→ 4 beta glycosidic linkages, or a mixture of 1 → 3 and 1→ 4 beta-glycosidic linkages.

82. The composition of claim 75 wherein the polysaccharide is locust bean gum, guar gum, carrageenan, alginate, modified cellulose, beta-glucan, or glucomannan.

83. The composition of claim 75 wherein the polysaccharide has Formula I:



wherein

each R is separately hydroxy, lower alkyloxy, or hydroxy (lower(alkyloxy));

n is an integer ranging from about 500 to about 2500; and

X is an R group or a covalent bond to the oxygen at the first position of the adjacent monosaccharide.

84. The composition of claim 75 wherein the polysaccharide is methylcellulose, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxyethyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxybutyl methylcellulose, 2-hydroxyethyl ethylcellulose, 2-hydroxypropyl cellulose, methyl ethylcellulose, or 2-hydroxyethylcellulose.
85. The composition of claim 75 wherein the polysaccharide is β-glucan.
86. The composition of claim 75 wherein the polysaccharide is hydroxypropyl methylcellulose.
87. The composition of claim 75 wherein the composition provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1000 mPa·s to about 3000 mPa·s
88. The composition of claim 75 wherein the composition provides an intestinal viscosity of about 1500 mPa·s to about 2500 mPa·s.
89. The composition of claim 75 wherein the percentage of body fat is reduced in at least about three weeks to at least about eight weeks
90. The composition of claim 75 wherein the percentage of body fat is reduced in at least about four weeks to at least about six weeks.

91. The composition of claim 75 wherein the composition is administered indefinitely.
92. The composition of claim 75 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 5% to about 40%.
93. The composition of claim 75 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 10% to about 30%.
94. The composition of claim 75 where the percentage of body fat is reduced by about 15% to about 25%.
95. The composition of claim 75 where the mammal is a human.
96. The composition of claim 75 incorporated into an applesauce, a cereal, a cookie, a cracker, a flavored drink, a fruit juice, an ice cream, a milk shake, a pudding or a snack bar.